

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

In the communication mailed July 6, 2004, the Examiner has rejected claims 1 through 4, 10, 11, 18 and 19 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Veillard (FR 2,193,478) in view of Vinton (U.S. 4,803,868). Additionally, the Examiner has rejected claims 5 and 6 as being unpatentable over Veillard in view of Vinton, as above, and further in view of Krahm (US 2001/0016059 A1). Claims 13 through 16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Veillard in view of Vinton, as above, and further in view of Achter (U.S. 5,939,619). Finally, the Examiner has rejected claim 20 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Veillard in view of Vinton, as above, and further in view of Westbrook (U.S. 6,067,844). The Examiner has objected to claims 7-9, 12 and 17 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but has indicated that such claims would be allowable if re-written in independent form.

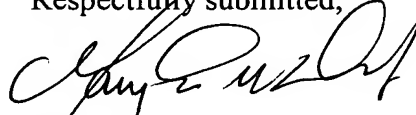
Upon entry of the instant amendment, all rejected claims will be cancelled. Additionally, upon entry of the instant amendment, objected claim 17 will be presented in independent format (claim 21), with several dependent claims.

Applicants will pursue the cancelled claims (1 through 16 and 18 through 20) in a separate, continuing application.

Application No.: 10/662,601
Amdt dated: September 2, 2004
Reply to Office action of July 6, 2004

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the subject application is in condition for allowance and such favorable action at an early date is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,



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I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the U.S. Postal Service as first class mail in an envelope addressed to:

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